



[Freedman, Tom Z., and Jim McLaughlin. "Americans Are Searching for Common Ground. The Poll Finds It." \*The Spokesman-Review\*, 1 June 2025, p. E2](#)

This article is an *Opinion* piece published by *The Spokesman-Review*. As with all opinion writing, it reflects the views of the author not necessarily objective facts. This provides a valuable opportunity for students to think critically, evaluate the arguments presented, and reflect on their own perspectives regarding the same topic.

### **Classroom Discussion Questions College Level**

**Civil Discourse in a Polarized Society:** In an increasingly polarized climate, what strategies can individuals and institutions use to encourage constructive dialogue across ideological divides? How can students contribute meaningfully to that effort?

**Journalism as a Tool for Understanding:** In what ways can journalism serve as a bridge between opposing viewpoints or communities? Evaluate how responsible media coverage can foster empathy and civic engagement.

**Active Citizenship and Responsibility:** As future leaders and professionals, what role do you believe you have in promoting mutual respect, especially when engaging in conversations about complex or controversial issues?

### **Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 9-12**

**Civic Engagement & Dialogue:** The supplement discusses the importance of bridging divides and finding common ground in local communities. What are some barriers to open dialogue in today's society, and how can young people actively work to overcome them?

**Media Literacy & Perspective-Taking:** How can journalism help foster understanding between individuals with differing viewpoints? Provide an example from the supplement or another current event where media played a role in encouraging empathy or civil discourse.

**Personal Responsibility in Democracy:** Reflect on your role as a citizen in a diverse community. What actions can you take—now and in the future—to contribute to respectful and productive discussions about controversial issues?

## **Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 6-8**

**Talking with People Who Think Differently:** Why is it sometimes hard to talk to people who see things differently than we do? What are some ways you can listen and talk respectfully, even when you disagree?

**The Role of News and Stories:** How can newspapers or news stories help people understand each other better? Can you think of a time when a story helped you see something in a new way?

**Being a Good Community Member:** What are some things you can do to help your school or neighborhood be a place where people feel heard and respected—even when they have different opinions?

## **Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 1-5**

**Getting Along with Others:** Why is it important to be kind when someone has a different idea than you? What can you do if you don't agree with a friend?

**Learning from Stories:** How can reading or watching news stories help us learn about other people and what they think or feel?

**Being a Good Helper in Your Community:** What are some ways you can help make your school or neighborhood a friendlier place for everyone?